

# **Straight Ahead**

By Robert Keyes

Director of Golf Instruction - Picton Golf & Country Club  
& Keystroke Golf Academy

## **“Looking back, looking forward”**

Ok, now that our golfing season has almost come to a close, I thought it would be a great idea to review some key points and to talk about what we can do over the winter months, to maintain or even improve our games. We'll keep things simple and straightforward and essentially treat this as an overview. If you missed some of my columns, you can email me at [northstring@gmail.com](mailto:northstring@gmail.com). I'll be happy to send any your way.

I hope that most of you will not get too far away from your game this winter, whether you're heading to the sunny south or just trying to keep the cobwebs away at an indoor practice facility.

It's also important to get yourself a plan of attack for next season by taking inventory of what area, or areas were giving you the most trouble. Was there a certain shot that you found contributed to your ballooning golf scores round after round?

Winter also can provide a perfect opportunity for you to increase your strength and flexibility, as they pertain to the golf swing. There are numerous plans out there, so choose one that fits your schedule, physical level and coincides with your goals and overall vision.

As you all know, in my world, great golf begins with a great "Address Position". These 7 steps place your body and mind in a swing-ready position. Here they are (without going into the finer details) again:

1. Pick a target
2. Place the front foot
3. Place the back foot
4. Set the posture (bobbing duck)

5. Unlock the knees and adjust your distance from the ball
6. Aim the clubface
7. Check the grip

A lack of discipline in this area drastically reduces your chance of hitting consistently better shots. It is so easy and very common to overlook or get lazy when setting up. Most folks in the beginning, when they're learning a new setup, focus on doing everything in a correct fashion. Sadly though, they don't "stay the course" when their shots fly off the golf course. Stay calm and stay consistent!

If you took some lessons this past season, perhaps you've lost focus of what a good Address Position should be. It can happen to golfers of every level, including the low handicappers. Maybe you might even need to begin at the beginning. Working on developing your Address Position over the winter months, can be one of the best investments of your time you'll ever make.

Another one of the best things that you can try to develop over the winter months is the notion of trying to acquire a better semblance of "balance". Assure yourself that by keying in on the overall balance in your feet and striving to maintain a consistently light and balanced grip pressure, you'll be giving yourself the best opportunity to lower those scores. Also, insert that same sense of balance into your overall swing tempo. Strive to keep the tempo relaxed and consistent. It will be easier to do that without a golf ball and you'll develop good habits.

Use your imagination also. See yourself swinging and applying these attributes in your mind's eye. Play your favourite golf course in the comfort of your living room, in your car or even on a nice, winter walk! The best athletes in the world, in all sports, utilize this technique so why shouldn't you.

Well that's a wrap for this season. Don't hesitate to contact me regarding any issues you're having. Let me know if you've had some success with your game this season, when it comes to applying these principals. If you're having some issues and would like to clear them

up, I also am available for winter lessons at the golf dome at Loyalist College in Belleville. Indoor learning is almost an advantage. You become more focused on you and less on the ball. In my world, that's a great start!

Thanks for allowing me this great opportunity to share my ideas and a very special thanks to the members of The Picton Golf & Country Club for making it a reality. See you next year!

If you have any questions regarding the areas we have discussed today or have any queries about material from past articles, you can contact me at 613-885-9883 or by email at [northstring@gmail.com](mailto:northstring@gmail.com).

**Until Next Time...Straight Ahead!**